

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 20, 2010

**CHIEF JUSTICE FITZGERALD TO RECEIVE ILLINOIS PROBATION
AND COURT SERVICES ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT'S AWARD; JUSTICE
KILBRIDE TO KEYNOTE ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET**

Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas R. Fitzgerald will be honored for his dedication to probation services during the Illinois Probation and Court Services Association (IPCSA) conference awards banquet. The event will be held Thursday, October 21 starting at 6 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Hotel and Conference Center in East Peoria.

Incoming Chief Justice Thomas L. Kilbride will keynote the awards banquet and accept the President's Award on behalf of Chief Justice Fitzgerald. Justice Kilbride recently was unanimously elected Chief Justice by his colleagues on the Court effective October 26, 2010.

During the 41st annual awards banquet, Chief Justice Fitzgerald will be awarded the President's Award "for his life-long commitment to improving the criminal justice system, his recognition of the role of probation in that system, and his critical support for probation officers throughout his career."

"Chief Justice Fitzgerald was selected for the President's Award for his courageous leadership during these extremely difficult and trying economic times," said IPCSA President-Elect David Beery. "When the legislature failed to appropriate sufficient state dollars to adequately fund probation and court services, Chief Justice Fitzgerald stepped to the forefront and was able to convince the Governor to provide enough additional funding to avert a catastrophe.

"Chief Justice Fitzgerald's knowledge and understanding of the role probation and court services plays in the criminal justice field spurred his action to request and obtain this critical additional funding."

Chief Justice Fitzgerald was nearing the end of his first full 10-year term on the Court and had completed two years of a three-year term as Chief Justice when he announced he will be retiring October 25, 2010, ending a long and distinguished career.

He is a native Chicagoan, and attended Loyola University before enlisting in the United States Navy. After his tour of duty, Chief Justice Fitzgerald graduated with honors from The John

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Marshall Law School, where he was a founder of the school's current law review and served as the law review's associate editor.

The son of a Circuit Court judge, Chief Justice Fitzgerald began his own career in the law as a prosecutor in the Cook County State's Attorney's office. When first elected to the bench in 1976, he was at that time the youngest elected Circuit judge in Cook County. He served as trial judge in the Criminal Court from 1976-1987 when he was assigned Supervising Judge of Traffic Court. In 1989, he returned to the criminal division as Presiding Judge.

Chief Justice Fitzgerald was elected to the Supreme Court in 2000.

Justice Kilbride is known as a common man in an uncommon position who took an unusual path to reach the top of his profession. As the only member of the seven justices who had not served as a judge before, he brings a rare perspective to the Court.

Justice Kilbride grew up in Kankakee, received his B.A. degree magna cum laude from Saint Mary's College in 1978; and his law degree from Antioch School of Law in Washington D.C. in 1981.

He had been a practitioner for nearly 20 years, first as a legal services attorney for the poor, then for a mid-sized law firm and as a solo practitioner in a storefront office. Throughout all of those years, he was continuously involved in volunteer service in the Rock Island area.

IPSCA is one of the nation's largest professional organizations representing probation officers across the state of Illinois. IPSCA represents more than 2,500 criminal justice professionals who work in the 23 Circuit Courts in Illinois, in all 102 counties in the state, to supervise more than 110,000 offenders, both adult and juvenile, in their communities.

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(For more information: Contact Joseph Tybor, press secretary to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.2323)